

As most of you know, two weeks ago I submitted my resignation to the Board of Directors. This was after a long and careful time of discernment about what I considered to be the best, most growth- and health-concerned needs both for the church and for myself. My letter is available in the church's newsletter, on the website, and by request if needed.

Change is part of the life of the church, just as change is part of our daily lives. I hope that part of my ministry to you will be demonstrating that these transitions are common and healthy and filled with love.

Some of you have shared with me in the last two weeks how important I have been to your spiritual path in our time together. I'm very grateful and affirmed to have the chance to know I've made a difference. Not all pastors (or people) get to hear or witness the fruit of the seeds scattered.

I want to affirm this community as part of our spiritual nurture, as well. I have witnessed what you are to one another, the ways that you have used coffee hour here like no other congregation to provide comfort, laughter, and learning to each other. The way that during bible studies and small group gatherings you have made yourselves vulnerable to one another, encouraged one another, and challenged each other.

When I first arrived at Open Door, Jolene was very fond of telling me that she would come to this church no matter who the pastor was. Jolene is very fond of saying provocative things like that. And Jolene is right on: this church is a body, and like Paul said, the hand isn't greater than the foot isn't greater than the head isn't greater than the eye. I want to encourage you to continue to be the hands, feet, heads, and eyes of this church. God has no hands on earth but yours, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the minds with which God looks on the world, yours the feet, yours the hands, yours the minds.

Please don't only wait to find out what kind of church emerges during this transition. Please also come forward, grab hold, pull together, talk about what you want and need, help to shape and mold, help select the new leader that will bring you forward together.